

Fort Rock/Silver Lake Soil & Water Conservation District



Annual Work Plan

2026-2027

Fort Rock/Silver Lake Soil and Water Conservation District

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The mission of the Fort Rock/Silver Lake soil and Water Conservation district is to provide technical assistance to individuals, groups, and other agencies for the purpose of managing and enhancing our natural resources, environment, and economy. The objectives listed below will be used to accomplish the mission of this District.

Objective #1 Maintain Sound and Stable District Operations

For the public: To conduct district business fairly, openly and respectfully in a non-discriminatory manner and within adopted plans, objectives, policies and legal guidelines. The staff will provide technical assistance and information resources to the public and partners, secure adequate, stable funding for district operations, maintain accountability, develop and maintain cooperative partnerships, and build capacity.

For the district: The employees and contractors of the district will:

- Maintain consistent and reliable correspondence with employees, board members, partners and the general public.
- Track district income and expenses according to generally accepted accounting principles.
- Complete payroll and payroll taxes.
- Track and reconcile grant funds, as well as report on these funds, as required by funders.
- Prepare quarterly agendas, minutes, and financial reports for board members to review and attend quarterly meetings.
- Take on additional duties upon direction of the board.
- Prepare and present the Annual Work Plan, Scope of Work, and Budgets to the board for review, revision and adoption.
- Maintain and update all district policies, as well as present them to the board for adoption.
- Staff will prepare for and conduct the annual financial review or audit in a timely manner and work with auditors providing requested documents.
- Staff and/or board members will strive to attend the Oregon Association of Conservation Districts (OACD) annual meeting, as well as trainings in natural resource disciplines concerning water quality/quantity and conservation issues.
- Staff will coordinate the annual meeting and any board and staff member trainings that are needed.

- Establish and maintain formal Memorandums of Understanding and Cooperative Agreements to clarify all financial and working relationships with other groups and agencies.

Objective #2 Promote Conservation of Natural Resources and Water Quality on Agricultural Lands

In General: Staff will write and monitor grants for interested landowners that re-establish and protect Lake County resource concerns, provide technical assistance to landowners and grant applicants related to agricultural water quality/quantity, soil issues, juniper thinning, Sage-Grouse habitat, wildfire restoration, and riparian conditions. Staff will assist in the permitting application process when needed, provide construction inspection, and follow-up for operation and maintenance in the application process and the grant writing process.

Staff will work with the Lake County Umbrella Watershed Council (LCUWC) and the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) to identify producer needs and concerns and assist with tasks related to natural resource conservation and water quality.

Staff will make contact with landowners and provide technical assistance relating to riparian restoration, weed eradication, irrigation efficiency, pasture management, manure management, cover crops, assist with conservation planning implementation and work with ODA on compliance visits when needed.

The Wildlife Biologist will continue to work with the Sage-Grouse conservation efforts. The biologist will continue to work with landowners, signing them up for the Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances (CCAA) program and creating site specific plans that will restore and/or enhancement their habitat.

Staff will provide communication to and advocacy support for landowners and habitats in Lake County that are impacted by proposed or existing legislation and/or media attention.

Staff and contractors will participate in local, regional, and state natural resource boards, collaboratives, and partnerships to represent landowners and their interests.

Staff will attend water, soil, ecological and conservation trainings.

District Manager will participate as a board member on the OACD board.

Specific Projects: Staff will continue to work extensively on CCAA efforts and coordinating/partnering with LCCWMA, NRCS, Watershed Council, BLM, DSL, USFWS, and others to implement the program. The district also continues to execute our OWEB Sage Grouse FIP Technical Assistance grant to support staff in implementing, monitoring, and

reporting the conservation actions and achievements within the CCAA program. This project also includes identifying and developing projects in the district such as juniper removal, invasive annual grass treatments, spring developments, mesic area improvements, and fencing to improve sage grouse habitat, rangeland conditions and water quality and availability to the watershed.

An OWEB funded monitoring project began in 2023 and will continue through 2026 to examine the effects of seeding and land treatments compared with natural revegetation of bunchgrasses. This project has the goal of cost effective land treatment post fire.

Staff also continues to work with a group of irrigators to assist with monitoring of irrigation water use. This data is being gathered to help find opportunities for efficiency upgrades.

Objective #3 Provide Conservation Education and Information

The district will host an annual speech contest for seventh and eighth grade students in the district with the topics focused around agricultural and conservation practices.

The district's website will be revised and maintained. The site will better educate the public on what the district does and what it has to offer.

The district will continue to produce and support the production of informational and education video series regarding agriculture and conservation.

The district will provide support to youth agricultural education programs, like 4-H and FFA, through sponsorships and purchases of livestock at the county fair.

Objective #4 Promote Weed Awareness for Watershed Health

The district supports the local Lake County Cooperative Weed Management Area (LCCWMA) meetings and events with participation.

Objective #5 NRCS Conservation Technical Assistance partnership

Staff will support NRCS in their EQIP program, assist in conservation planning inventory on upland watershed projects, conservation planning development and implementation, Sage-Grouse Initiative status reviews, HEL determinations and local and basin Work Group meetings.

Staff will partner with the LCUWC, LCCWMA, Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife (ODFW), Ducks Unlimited (DU), USFW and BLM on riparian process and function issues, and water quality issues.

Objective #6 Fundraising

Funding will be raised through writing grants for conservation and watershed health, providing the district with administration, project management, travel, pre and post-implementation fees.

The district will continue to seek other avenues of funding for administration and technical support from other public and/or private grant funding sources.

The district will promote the rental of a no-till drills, rangeland drill, and dump truck, as an additional service to the community and source of funding.

Objective #8 Staff Trainings

Staff will attend pertinent trainings related to implementation on agricultural practices, conservation planning, monitoring, office practices, procedures, accounting, QuickBooks, etc.

Board Members:

Scott Duffner – Chair

Jeremiah Thorsted – Vice Chair

Conley Kittredge – Secretary/Treasurer

Chaylon Shuffield

Shane Forman

Staff:

Justin Ferrell – District Manager

Brandi St. Clair – Wildlife Biologist

Tanya Graham – Contracted Fiscal Admin

Tess Baker – Contracted Office Admin

Fara Brummer – Contracted Biologist

Riane Miles – Contracted Field Assistant

The Fort Rock/Silver Lake Soil and Water Conservation District board of directors reviewed the July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027 Work Plan and approved the plan at the June 10, 2025 board meeting.

Scott Duffner

Scott Duffner (Jun 10, 2025 16:00 PDT)

Signature

06/10/2025

Date


Fort Rock/Silver Lake Soil & Water Conservation District


Final Audit Report


2025-06-10


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